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Emmett W. Fairfax, Chairman

Carson Ross, Vice Chairman

Carl H. Niewoehner , Member

Bernadette A. Miller, Member

Arvid E. West, Jr., Member

Bob Holden Governor



Ronald L. Taylor
Executive Director

MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION

1719 Southridge Drive, P.O. Drawer 147, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0147 Telephone: (573) 751-3779 www.mvc.state.mo.us FAX: (573) 751-6836

FY 2004 saw both the conclusion of plans made in the previous decade and new beginnings required by recent changes in the world situation. The Commission dedicated a new 100-bed special care unit at the St. Louis Veterans Home in early 2004 and began admitting residents to the new 200-bed Veterans Home at Mt. Vernon in June. This was the culmination of plans to expand the number of Veterans homes beds to 1,350 statewide. The Commission also dedicated two new Veterans Cemeteries at Bloomfield and Jacksonville which represents the culmination of the four cemetery system envisioned in 1996.

While the Commission continued its efforts to reach all 562,000 of Missouri's veterans with information and assistance on Veterans benefits it also became involved in new outreach efforts to assist the thousands of National Guard members and Reservists who were activated to serve following September 11, 2001. The severe disruption this has created for them and their families as well as their requirements for information and assistance when they return to Missouri has created a new challenge for the Veterans Commission and its staff.

CONTACT US

State Veterans Home Cameron

1111 Euclid. Cameron, MO 64429 Phone: (816) 632-6010 Fax: (816) 632-1361

State Veterans Home Cape Girardeau

2400 Veterans Memorial Drive Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 Phone: (573) 290-5870 Fax: (573) 290-5909

State Veterans Home Mexico

#1 Veterans Drive Mexico, MO 65265-0473 Phone: (573) 581-1088 Fax: (573) 581-5356

State Veterans Home Mt. Vernon

1600 S. Hickory Mt. Vernon, MO 65712-1098 Phone: (417) 466-7103 Fax: (417) 466-4040

State Veterans Home St. James

620 N. Jefferson St. James, MO 65559-1999 Phone: (573) 265-3271 Fax: (573) 265-5771

State Veterans Home St. Louis

10600 Lewis & Clark Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63136 Phone: (314) 340-6389 Fax: (314) 340-6379

<u>State Veterans Home</u> <u>Warrensburg</u>

1300 Veterans Road Warrensburg, MO 64093 Phone: (660) 543-5064 Fax: (660) 543-5075

Commission Headquarters

Missouri Veterans Commission 1719 Southridge Drive, PO Drawer 147 Jefferson City, MO 65102 Phone: (573) 751-3779 Fax: (573) 751-6836

State Veterans Cemetery Higginsville

20109 Business Highway 13 Higginsville, MO 64037 Phone: (660) 584-5252 Fax: (660) 584-9525

State Veterans Cemetery Springfield

5201 South Southwood Road Springfield, MO 65804 Phone: (417) 823-3944 Fax: (417) 823-0252

State Veterans Cemetery Bloomfield

17357 Stars & Stripes Way Bloomfield, MO 63825 Phone: (573) 568-3871 Fax: (573) 568-3421

State Veterans Cemetery Jacksonville

1479 County Road 1675 Jacksonville, MO 65260 (Phone: (660) 295-4237 Fax: (660) 295-4259

Director, Service to Veterans Program

VA Regional Office 400 South 18th Street, Room 107 St. Louis, MO 63103-2271 Phone: (314) 552-9890 Fax: (314) 340-7968

Supervisor, St. Louis Region

VA Regional Office, 400 South 18th Street St. Louis, MO 63103-2271 Phone: (314) 589-9885

Supervisor, Northwest Region

MO State Office Building 525 Jules, Room 320 St. Joseph, MO 64501 Phone: (816) 387-2841

Supervisor, Northeast Region

1500 Vandiver Drive Suite 107 Columbia, MO 65202 Phone: (573) 882-5135

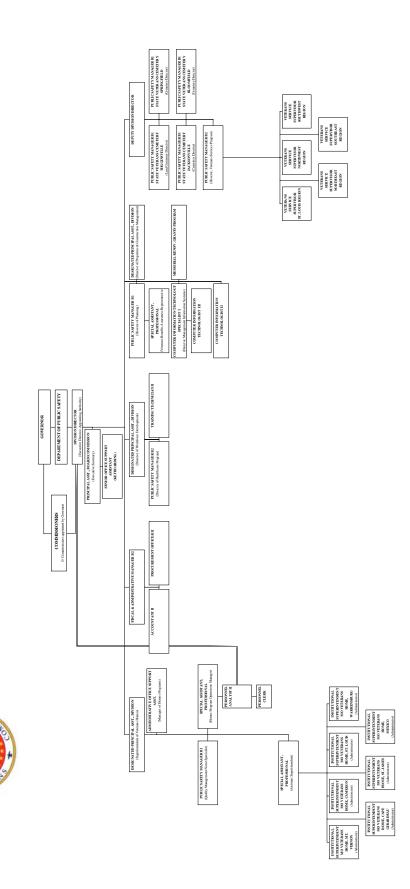
Supervisor, Southwest Region

149 Park Central, Room 252, Box 451 Springfield, MO 65806 Phone: (417) 895-6532

Supervisor, Southeast Region

2400 Veterans Memorial Drive Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 Phone: (573) 290-5752

Missouri Veterans Commission Administration



Missouri State Veterans Cemeteries

In 1996, the Commission was authorized to implement a state veterans cemetery program. In January of 2000, interments began at Springfield and Higginsville. Two additional veterans cemeteries, Bloomfield and Jacksonville began interments in the fall of 2003. Planning is underway for a fifth veterans cemetery to be constructed adjacent to Fort Leonard Wood.



"Provide interment services for veterans and their eligible family members in a dignified, efficient, and compassionate manner."

The cemetery program is a reflection and continuing reminder of our gratitude and respect for the service and sacrifices of Missouri veterans.

The VISION and GOAL of the Missouri Veterans Cemetery System is to locate cemeteries strategically throughout the state, making it possible for veterans and their families to have access within a 75-mile radius of their homes.

The existing cemeteries vary in size from 55 to 117 acres. The estimated capacity for the four cemeteries is in excess of 120,000 graves. The establishment of a veterans cemetery at Fort



Leonard Wood will provide approximately 100,000 additional graves, ensuring our ability to serve Missouri veterans for many decades.

Each state veterans cemetery consists of a committal shelter where interment services are conducted, an administration and maintenance area, and a columbarium wall for the placement of cremation urns. Facilities and grounds are maintained in accordance with standards established by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

There is no charge for any of the services provided at the state veterans cemeteries. Benefits include:



Burial space Grave liner Upright granite marker Opening and closing of the grave Perpetual Care Military honors

Veterans, active duty military, and their dependents are eligible for burial in a Missouri State Veterans Cemetery.

An eligible veteran must have been discharged or separated from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable and have completed the required period of service as established by federal law.

The veteran must have resided in Missouri for a minimum of 180 days at some period in his or her life.

Persons entitled to retired pay as a result of 20 years creditable service with the Reserves or National Guard are eligible for burial in a Missouri State Veterans Cemetery. A U.S. citizen who served in the armed forces of a government allied with the United States may also be eligible for burial in a Missouri State Veterans Cemetery. Note: Any veteran convicted of federal or state.

Missouri State Veterans Homes

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 Missouri's seven State Veterans Homes sought to accomplish the Missouri Veterans Commission mission, "To honor and serve the Veterans whose dedication and sacrifice have preserved our nation and its freedoms" by:

- Maintaining the high quality care standards which have become its trademark.
- Accomplishing growth in total number of Veterans served, bed capacity and several other key areas.

The pictures accompanying these pages tell part of these stories from the past year. In addition to these pictures are the facts behind them. During FY 2004 the Homes Program cared for 1413 special Americans, our country's Veterans. This total is a new record and accounted for a 92% overall occupancy rate. For the approximately 1300 employees – the Program's most valued resource – the story includes daily dedication by these great employees as they care for our State's Veterans – America's Heroes - living in Missouri.

"Through inspired employees, the Missouri Veterans Homes daily enrich the lives of the veterans we care for through the provision of quality healthcare in a state-of-the art facility."





While repeating the exceptional veteran resident satisfaction, care and employee recognition outcomes, the Homes Program achieved the following program growth milestones during the year:



• Two Homes, the Missouri Veterans Homes at St. Louis and Mt. Vernon, took occupancy of major construction expansion projects. Opening ceremonies were held at both Homes with Governor Bob Holden providing keynote remarks and marked the end to multiple year construction projects for each. A requirement for taking occupancy required both Homes to complete regulatory occupancy surveys with a 100% regulatory standards "met" rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The St. Louis survey occurred in February 2004 and allowed the Home to take occupancy of its 100 bed Dementia Center of Excellence addition, bringing total facility capacity to 300 beds. The Mt. Vernon survey was completed in May 2004 and granted the Home its much anticipated approval to move into a new, state of the art 200 bed facility. This was an increase over its current leased space 100 bed operation. These final expansion projects bring total Veterans Home capacity to 1350 beds.

Service to Veterans

We will honor those we serve by proudly treating everyone with the respect, compassion and dignity they earned through service to their country.

We will hold ourselves to the highest professional standards by maintaining and sharing our expertise in all veterans benefits.

We will aggressively pursue every opportunity to obtain benefits that will enrich the lives of our veterans and their families.

We will each take a leadership role within the commission and our communities to promote a more unified, coordinated approach to all services provided by the Missouri Veterans Commission.



Veterans Service Offices are located in almost every county to make services available to veterans close to their homes. Veterans Service Officers and Assistants are also available to groups interested in veterans' benefits. These qualified personnel may give presentations and instruction regarding the benefits for which veterans may be eligible as a result of military service in the U. S. Armed Forces.

The Commission has twenty-seven Service to Veterans home offices located in Cameron, Cape Girardeau, Carthage, Columbia, Farmington, Ft Leonard Wood, Hannibal, Jefferson City, Joplin, Kansas City, Kennett, Kirksville, Lebanon, Maryville, Mexico, Mt Vernon, Overland, Poplar Bluff, St Charles, St James, St Joseph, St Louis, Sedalia, Sikeston, Springfield, Warrensburg and West Plains. There are also ninety-eight Satellite Offices located throughout the State.

The Service to Veterans Program is operated by a Director, five Veteran Service Supervisors, thirty-one Veteran Service Officers/Veterans Service Assistants and ten clerical staff.

During Fiscal Year 2004, the service officers and assistants in the Service to Veterans Program participated in twelve Veterans Benefits Supermarkets that were held around the state. They provided information on benefits and assistance with claims for over 4400 veterans who attended these supermarkets. They also answered inquiries generated by the toll free line, manned booths at various county and regional fairs as well as the Missouri State Fair, and made presentations on veterans benefits at numerous locations around the state, in addition to their regular duties. The service officers prepared 19,430 veterans forms and added 4,971 new clients to the veterans database in FY 2004.



Veterans Benefits Awareness Task Force



In November 2001, Lt. Governor Joe Maxwell headed an organized group of citizens in developing a statewide campaign whose sole purpose is to identify and enroll some 30,000 eligible Missouri Veterans for those Veterans Affairs benefits that they might have earned.



August 2002, Governor Bob Holden announced the statewide kickoff of the Veterans Benefits Awareness Task Force. The task forces goal was to assist veterans in submitting over 4,000 claims over the next year. By FY04 the plan was to increase the Veterans Affairs compensation and pension benefits paid by \$40 million over the fiscal year 2002 amount.

Veterans Benefits Supermarkets

This program informs veterans of available benefits and creates a process where veterans can apply for benefits on-site. Veterans can access Job Search Assistance, Small Business Information, Education Opportunities, Health Screenings and Veterans Benefits Assistance. The first supermarket was held on July 20, 2002 in Florissant, Missouri. Since June 30, 2004 twenty Supermarkets have been held serving over 6,000 veterans and their dependents. An estimated additional 30 to 100 veterans attended each event, but did not register.



August 2, 2002 Governor Bob Holden announced the new veterans hotline number 1-866-VETINFO. A new statewide toll-free number to improve veterans' access to their benefits. The service is an inbound telephone system made to a staffed call center, with the gathered information compiled into a database or spreadsheets, then distributed to multiple Missouri Veterans Commission staff. This toll free number has received over 6,400 calls assisting veterans.

Veterans Trust Fund

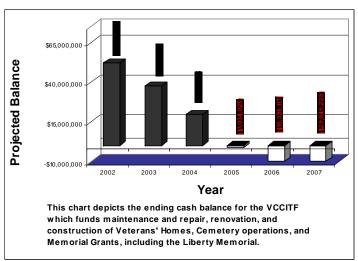
Veterans Trust Fund Statement of Receipts and **Disbursements Fiscal Year 2004**

Beginning Balance	\$408,806
Receipts	
Tax Check-Off Direct Donations Interest Income	\$86,714 \$6,005 \$6,810
Total Receipts Disbursements	\$99,529
Personal Services Travel Printing, Advertising & Publications	\$51,840 \$7,797 \$964
Veterans Benefits Awareness Program Promotional Supplies	\$4,539 \$2,679
Transfers Total Disbursements	\$33,809 \$101,628
Ending Balance	\$406,707

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Home Fund (HF)

The Home Fund is the primary source of revenue for the Missouri Veterans Homes. This fund is a combination of monies received from the residents living in the home and reimbursements from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. This approximates 87 percent of the home's operating budget.



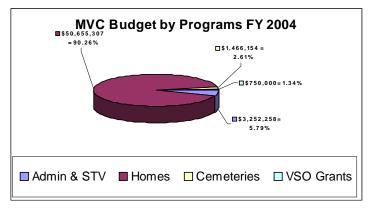
Veterans Commission Capital

Improvements Trust Fund (VCCITF)

The VCCITF receives transfers from the Gaming Commission Fund for the operation of our four cemeteries, and the maintenance, repair, renovation and construction projects at our seven veterans homes.

Federal Funds (FED)

Federal grants from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs supplement the construction of our homes and cemeteries. These funds are based on a percentage of total project costs. For example, the last two cemeteries were 100 percent federally funded projects. The homes projects are funded at a 65% federal and 35% state share of the total construction cost.



Veterans Trust Fund (VTF)

The Veterans Trust Fund is a charitable fund that receives donations from businesses, individuals or through the income tax form check-off box. These funds can be used across the Commission.